



Connecticut River Area Health District

455 Boston Post Rd. Suite 7 Old Saybrook, CT 06475

Phone 860-661-3300 Fax 860-661-3333

Serving Old Saybrook, Clinton and Deep River

February 26, 2013

Public Health Committee

L.O.B. Room 5007

Hartford, CT 06106-1591

RE: TESTIMONY REGARDING PROPOSED BILL #352, AAC MUNICIPAL SEWERAGE SYSTEMS

Dear Chairwoman Rep. Johnson, Co-chair Senator Gerratana and Committee members:

Good day. My name is Jim Monopoli. I am the local Director of Health for the Connecticut River Area Health District. I oppose proposed bill #352, which allows for expansion of authority of Municipal Water Pollution Control Authorities (WPCAs) over private on-site sewage disposal systems.

Regulatory authority over private sewage disposal systems discharging less than 5,000 gallons per day presently lies with the CT Department of Public Health and local health departments such as ours. Our district alone regulates several thousand systems. This structure has existed for several decades with an exemplary track record. The existing regulatory program is one that possesses the flexibility to systematically incorporate and approve new technologies and concepts in on-site sewage disposal so as to keep current in its regulations.

Our health district, as well as most health districts and departments across the state, employs qualified Licensed Sanitarians to manage the on-site sewage disposal regulatory oversight within their respective jurisdictions. In addition, there is a statewide program in place administered by the Department of Public Health which offers training and continuing education to all Sanitarians to keep them current in regulation changes, updates, and most importantly, to enforce codes and standards uniformly statewide. Authority is granted to the local Director of Health to regulate on-site sewage disposal systems in the CT Public Health Code and local ordinances.

We are concerned that transferring this important, successful program to municipal water pollution control authorities is an attempt to abandon a long standing program that has demonstrated over many decades that it works well, to WPCAs with little to no experience in this arena, and without staff certified in on-site sewage disposal regulation. There is a richness in expertise and experience that would potentially be discarded if this bill moves forward to passage. This is also a financial concern, as most health districts and departments statewide rely on revenue generated from permit and program fees for on-site sewage disposal oversight.

To reiterate, I am opposed to Bill #352. I am also representing our district board of directors in opposing this bill. We ask that you please reject this bill and send a clear message to WPCAs statewide that the existing responsible program under public health should remain as the sole regulator of on site sewage disposal systems. I am available if you require more information or would like a further explanation on my views in this letter.

Sincerely,

Jim Monopoli, Director of Health
Connecticut River Area Health District